

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 895**

**A RESOLVE DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE TO AMEND ITS RULES REGARDING REQUIRED SETBACK
DISTANCES FOR BEAVER TRAPS**

PRESENTED BY: Representative WILLETTE of Mapleton

**COSPONSORED BY: Representative CRAFTS of Lisbon
DAVIS of Sangerville
ESPLING of New Gloucester
Senator JACKSON of Aroostook
Senator SHERMAN of Aroostook.**

DATE OF HEARING: April 2, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Jim Connolly, Wildlife Division Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking in opposition to **L.D. 895**.

L.D. 895 directs the commissioner to change the setback distances for beaver traps from active lodges and dams in certain Wildlife Management Districts.

The department has reviewed this issue as part of its annual rule making efforts for beaver trapping. When the department's furbearer and regional biologists reviewed this issue last year the information we had did not support the change proposed in this bill. The department continues to balance concerns about incidental catch of otter by beaver trappers with more liberal beaver trapping regulations. These regulations have been liberalized in those Wildlife Management Districts where we feel they will not adversely impact the otter and beaver populations. We would request the Committee to allow us to continue to evaluate that issue, this summer utilizing this year's trapping data and implement the changes that are appropriate. The department will continue to evaluate these issues annually and remains committed to providing additional trapping opportunity when possible while still maintaining our management system objectives for each species.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.